

GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
SALARIES AND EXPENSES

Makes several punctuation and non-substantive language changes as proposed by the Senate and appropriates \$339,499,000 for salaries and expenses. General Accounting Office instead of \$323,520,000 as proposed by the House and \$346,751,000 as proposed by the Senate. With respect to the provision added by the Senate regarding studies and assessments, the conferees have agreed to drop this provision.

TITLE III—GENERAL PROVISIONS

In Title III, General Provisions, section numbers have been changed to conform to the conference agreement. The conferees have agreed to the language of the House bill in section 302, have agreed to the provisions in the House bill regarding "buy American", the Legislative Branch Financial Managers Council, and the amendment to title 18, United States Code, covering the use of the House and the Congressional seals. The conferees have also agreed to sections 306 and 309 of the Senate bill regarding section 316 of Public Law 101-302 and the Senate restaurant system. The conferees have agreed to delete section 307 of the Senate bill, which amends the National Energy Conservation Policy Act, and section 308 of the Senate bill, regarding residence of Members of Congress. Also, the conferees have added a new provision which adjusts the cap on nine senior positions in the office of the Architect of the Capitol. The conferees intend that the cap adjustment be used for cost-of-living adjustment purposes.

ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES

The conferees are aware that the Energy Policy Act of 1992 calls for the incorporation of alternative fuel vehicles into Federal fleets. Inclusion of such clean fuel vehicles provides needed air quality benefits for the Nation's Capital. The conferees note that Senate report language directs the Architect of the Capitol and the Senate Sergeant at Arms to report to the Senate Committee on Appropriations by January 1, 1998, on how they could incorporate alternative fuel vehicles into their fleets consistent with their needs and requirements. Accordingly, the conferees direct the Comptroller General of the States, the Public Printer, the Capitol Police Board, the Clerk of the House, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Librarian of Congress, as well as the Senate Sergeant of Arms and the Architect of the Capitol to report to their respective Committees on Appropriations on a plan that would incorporate alternative fuel vehicles into their fleets consistent with their needs and requirements and the Energy Policy Act of 1992.

CONFERENCE TOTAL—WITH
COMPARISONS

The total new budget (obligational) authority for the fiscal year 1998 recommended by the Committee of Conference, with comparisons to the fiscal year 1997 amount, the 1998 budget estimates, and the House and Senate bills for 1998 follow:

New Budget (obligational authority, fiscal year 1997	\$2,202,881,200
Budget estimates of new (obligational) authority, fiscal year 1998	2,394,560,000
House bill, fiscal year 1998	1,711,417,000
Senate bill, fiscal year 1998	2,283,746,000
Conference agreement, fiscal year 1998	2,248,676,500

CONFERENCE AGREEMENT,
COMPARED WITH:

New budget (obligational) authority, fiscal year 1997	+45,795,300
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Budget estimates of new (obligational) authority, fiscal year 1998	-145,883,500
House bill, fiscal year 1998	+537,259,500
Senate bill, fiscal year 1998	-35,069,500

JAMES T. WALSH,
BILL YOUNG,
R. DUKE CUNNINGHAM,
ZACH WAMP,
TOM LATHAM,
BOB LIVINGSTON,
JOSÉ E. SERRANO,
VIC FAZIO,
MARCY KAPTUR,
DAVID OBEY,

Managers on the Part of the House.

ROBERT F. BENNETT,
TED STEVENS,
LARRY E. CRAIG,
THAD COCHRAN,
BYRON L. DORGAN,
BARBARA BOXER,
ROBERT BYRD,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

TRIBUTE TO MINNIE ELIZABETH
HARPER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. JONES] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to share the story of a truly remarkable American. While I was back in eastern North Carolina during the month of August, I had the great fortune to make the acquaintance of Minnie Elizabeth Harper.

Minnie Harper was born and raised in eastern North Carolina. A product of a loving and caring family, Minnie Harper is a 1974 honor graduate of Greene Central High School who has always been very active in her church and in her community. Even at a very young age, Minnie Harper was a role model to all who knew her. She was on a direct path to success.

Sadly, in June 1975, a terrible automobile accident left Minnie Harper a C-5 quadriplegic, but she did not let it lead her off her path to success. Such an accident may have hampered the dreams and broken the spirit of most people, but not Minnie Harper.

In her own words, Minnie Harper stated, and I quote, "I am not a failure. My parents did not raise any failures. My handicap has not totally impeded my dreams and goals; it has just altered the path and encouraged me to push forward."

Proving those words to be true, Minnie Harper went on to graduate with honors from Lenoir Community College in Kinston, NC in May 1981. Upon her graduation, Minnie Harper contin-

ued to give to her community. She founded and organized the American Community Girls Club in Snow Hill, NC, where she resides.

In this club, Miss Harper guided and motivated young ladies, encouraging them to pursue excellence and to build self-esteem. Today, these young ladies are following their own paths to success and remain in contact with their role model, Minnie Harper.

While continuing to volunteer in her community, Minnie Harper again focused on her educational goals. Having completed her degree at Lenoir Community College, Minnie Harper went on to obtain a bachelor of science degree in social work from East Carolina University in Greenville, NC.

After she graduated as a member of the National Honor Society, Minnie Harper was accepted to the East Carolina University masters program in social work. Before she could obtain her masters degree, sadly, yet another tragedy struck Minnie Harper's life.

A fire in her parents' home left her with second- and third-degree burns over 40 percent of her body. The accident also left her with severe facial damage, the loss of two fingers, and a permanent lung condition.

Ever optimistic, even after the tragic fire, Minnie Harper said, and I quote again, Mr. Speaker, "God has not given me any more than I can bear."

Minnie Harper continued with her selfless work. Incredibly, she has remained active in the community, helping others and setting an excellent example for all Americans, both young and old.

In December 1995, North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt appointed Minnie Harper to the North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council. In this capacity she works to raise awareness of the Independent Living Rehabilitation Program and ensures that handicapped citizens are recognized for the work they do.

Minnie Harper is a champion for the rights of handicapped citizens, both by giving them the spiritual and emotional support and encouragement she is famous for and by helping to make lawmakers aware of their needs.

I have truly been inspired by the story of Minnie Harper. Despite extraordinary unfortunate circumstances, Minnie Harper has not asked for handouts. Nor has she ever uttered the words "I cannot." She has persevered, she has succeeded, and she has helped others along the way with her dedication to her church, her family, her friends, and her community.

Minnie Harper has not complained about her hardships, but has always held a positive attitude and has given constant credit to God for giving her the strength to carry on. I admire Minnie Harper for her courage and her strength, and I thank her for serving as a role model to all who hear her incredible story.

Mr. Speaker, citizens like Minnie Harper truly make America great.

TRIBUTE TO RIZAL AGBAYANI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. FILNER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Mr. Rizal Agbayani, a veteran of World War II and a former member of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East. He died of a heart attack last week at the Fairfax Hospital in Virginia, near Washington, DC. He is survived by his wife, Criselda, and his eight children.

Mr. Agbayani came to Washington as part of the 37-veteran delegation from Hawaii attending the gathering of the National Advisory Council of Philippine-American Veteran Leaders. Almost 300 Filipino veterans were in our Nation's Capital last week, gathered together for the first time, working with a united front to achieve equity for all Filipino World War II veterans.

Mr. Agbayani actively took part in meetings with several Members of Congress. He was also one of the hundred demonstrators at a rally in front of the White House organized by National Advisory Council members and the 130-member Equity Caravan, a 6-city, 2-week march to Washington designed to call attention to the Filipino Veterans Equity Act (H.R. 836) and urging Congress to pass this bill.

Mr. Agbayani was named after Jose Rizal. A national hero of the Philippines, Rizal was executed for his fight to free the Philippines from colonial Spain, and this year marks the observance of the centennial anniversary of Rizal's death. Like his namesake, Mr. Agbayani died while fighting for justice, and today his body is being flown to the Philippines to his final resting place.

I want to take this opportunity to commemorate the life and struggle of Mr. Agbayani and the thousands of other Filipino World War II veterans whose participation was so crucial to the outcome of World War II. Too few Americans are familiar with this chapter in our Nation's history.

During this war, the military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were drafted to serve in our Armed Forces by Executive order of the President of the United States. Filipino soldiers defended the American flag in the now famous battles of Bataan and Corregidor. Thousands of Filipino prisoners of war died during the 65-mile Bataan death march. Those who survived were imprisoned under inhuman conditions where they suffered casualties at the rate of 50 to 200 prisoners a day. They endured 4 long years of enemy occupation.

The soldiers who escaped capture, together with Filipino civilians, fought against the occupation forces. Their guerilla attacks foiled the plans of the Japanese for a quick takeover of the region and allowed the United States the time needed to prepare forces to defeat Japan. After the liberation of the

Philippine Islands, the United States was able to use the strategically located Commonwealth of the Philippines as a base from which to launch the final efforts to win the war.

One would assume that the United States would be grateful to their Filipino comrades, so it is hard to believe that soon after the war ended, the 79th Congress voted in a way that can only be considered to be blatant discrimination, as they took away the benefits and recognition that the Filipino World War II veterans were promised.

Mr. Agbayani and his comrades have been fighting over 50 years to regain this recognition that they so deserve. Their sons and daughters have joined in the fight, wishing desperately to restore the honor and dignity to their fathers while they are still alive. The urgency is real, Mr. Speaker. At least six Filipino World War II veterans are dying each day.

Mr. Agbayani's journey to Washington last week was his final journey in search of this recognition for his Filipino World War II comrades. As a tribute to Mr. Agbayani and the thousands of other veterans already gone before us in death, I urge my colleagues to take a serious inventory of this issue, to cosponsor 836, and to correct a monumental injustice by restoring the benefits that were promised to the Filipino World War II veterans for their defense of democratic ideals.

GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah [Mr. HANSEN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HANSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HANSEN. Mr. Speaker, on September 18, 1996, one year ago today, President Clinton, claiming authority under the Antiquities Act, stood on the south side of the Grand Canyon of Arizona and designated 1.7 million acres of southern Utah as a national monument.

Over at the Committee on Resources, we have met with administration officials, held hearings, and subpoenaed documents in an effort to sort this thing out. I thought it might be appropriate, since today is the anniversary of that unprecedented election year stunt, to say a few words about what we have been able to come up with.

The first time I or any other Utah official heard about the National Monument was on September 7, 1996, when the Washington Post published an article announcing that President Clinton was about to use the Antiquities Act of 1906 to create a 2-million-acre national monument in southern Utah.

Naturally, we are all somewhat concerned. In fact, I think most of us found it a little hard to believe. Surely the President would have the decency to at least let the citizens of Utah

know if he were considering a move that would affect them so greatly.

When we expressed our concern to the Clinton administration, they denied they had even heard about such a thing. They tried to make it look like the monument was some kind of nebulous idea that was being kicked around, but that we should not really take it too seriously or worry about it. As late as September 11, Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt wrote to Utah Senator BENNETT and pretty much told him that.

Within the confines of the administration, however, it was clear the monument was a go. The real issue was keeping it a secret from the rest of the world. By July 1996 the Department of Interior had already hired law professor Charles Wilkinson to draw up the President's National Monument proclamation. In a letter written to Professor Wilkinson asking him to draw up the Proclamation, DOI Solicitor John Leshy wrote: "I can't emphasize confidentiality too much. If word leaks out, it probably won't happen, so take care."

When I say that the Clinton administration went to great lengths to keep everyone in the dark, I should probably qualify that a little. On August 5, 1996, CEQ chair Katy McGinty wrote a memo to Marcia Hale telling her to call some key western Democrats to get their reactions to the monument idea. There was conspicuous absence on her list, however, of anyone from the State of Utah. Not the governor, not the senators, not the Congressmen, not the Speaker of the House, not the President, nobody. Even the Democratic Congressman, Bill Orton, was kept in the dark. Clinton did not want to take any chances.

In the memo, Ms. McGinty emphasized that it should be kept secret, saying that "Any public release of the information would probably make the President change his options."

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Why, you ask, did President Clinton want to keep this secret from the rest of the world? Because it would ruin their timing. This announcement was a political election year stunt and those type of things have to be planned and timed perfectly. If news of the monument were to break too early, it would be old news by the time Bill Clinton did his photo op on the site of the Grand Canyon.

Let us back up and ask ourselves why President Clinton wanted to create this new 1.7 million acre national monument. The administration claimed it was to protect the land. For example, at our hearing this year, Katy McGinty said, "By last year the lands were in real jeopardy."

That sounds great, but the truth is the land was not in any danger. Even if it were, national monument status would not do anything to protect it. If anything, it takes away protection. We have requested documents from the administration where they admit to both